

# AN ACTIVE COMMUNITY BY DESIGN

## NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

By Mayor Gene Winstead

BICYCLING AND WALKING ARE POPULAR outdoor activities that are providing more and more people with recreation, fitness and transportation.

Designing communities where bicycling is a safe and convenient mode of transportation is something many cities are considering for the future. Bloomington, Hennepin County and neighboring cities are discussing plans to design, build and promote a bicycle transportation system that could link the area. Federal funding has been identified through a non-motorized transportation pilot program. Twenty-five million dollars are earmarked for Minneapolis and adjacent communities, and we are exploring whether Bloomington might benefit from this grant program.



If we can identify areas in our city where bike paths make sense, bike lanes could be considered when these streets come up for reconstruction. One of our goals would be to improve access for bicyclists and pedestrians while keeping traffic flowing.

Enhancing our transportation system to create more options for people increases mobility, promotes cleaner air and encourages physical activity. In 2004, the City took part in a Walkable Communities Workshop sponsored by the Metropolitan Council and Blue Cross Blue Shield to assess the community’s walkability and to help plan for the future. The City is currently collecting information on existing sidewalks and bikeways to assess and prioritize potential improvements and maintenance.

A solid trail system can provide options for bikers and walkers where they don’t have to compete with traffic. Bloomington has miles of hiking and biking trails within its 8,000 acres of designated parkland and recreational space, along the Minnesota River and around its lakes. The East Bush Lake Road Trail, currently under construction, will create 3.34 miles of new and existing trails with access to Hyland



Lake Park Reserve, Bush Lake Beach, Richardson Nature Preserve, Forest Glen Trail and Normandale Lake when it is completed this fall.

To increase awareness of the trail system, how they can be easily accessed and the benefits of utilizing the trails, Bloomington Public Health and the Parks and Recreation Division have developed a hiking and biking trail guide. For a free copy of the *Hiking and Biking Trail Guide*, call Public Health at 952-563-8904 or visit the City's Web site at [www.ci.bloomington.mn.us](http://www.ci.bloomington.mn.us), keywords: Trail guide.

# WE CARE - PUT SAFETY FIRST

THE METROPOLITAN COUNCIL AND BLOOMINGTON POLICE WANT YOU TO ENJOY YOUR BIKE RIDES FOR MANY YEARS TO COME. Please read these safety tips and traffic laws before riding.

## RIDE YOUR BICYCLE SAFELY

- Follow these safety tips:
- **Obey traffic laws.** A bicyclist has the same rights and responsibilities as an automobile driver.
  - **Choose the safest left turn.** Signal, move into the left lane and turn left. At a busy intersection, ride through the intersection, get off your bike on the right side of the road and walk with your bike across the street.
  - **Follow lane markings.** Don’t turn left from the right lane or go straight in a lane marked “right turn only.”

- **Always wear a helmet.** A helmet is the best way to prevent a serious injury if an accident occurs.
- **Watch for cars pulling out.** Make eye contact with drivers and assume they don’t see you.
- **Don’t weave in and out of parked cars.** Ride in a straight line with a safe distance between you and parked cars.
- **Scan the road behind you.** Look back and signal before changing lanes and consider using rearview mirrors.
- **Don’t ride with headphones in your ears.** Always be aware of traffic around you.



## FOLLOW THE RULES OF THE ROAD

- Bicyclists must know and obey the same traffic laws as motorists:
- **Ride on the right side of the road** with the flow of traffic and maintain control of your bicycle.
  - **Obey right-of-way rules.** Yield to traffic and pedestrians who have the right-of-way.
  - **Obey passing rules.** Pass to the left of a slower vehicle.

- **Use hand signals.** Signaling lets other drivers on the roadway know your intentions.
- **Avoid following too closely.** Do not tailgate other bicycles or vehicles.
- **Be properly outfitted for nighttime riding.** Ride after dark only if your bike has a headlight, taillight and reflectors as required by law for night riding. Wear reflective clothing and remain visible.

# BRIEFING

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